

## Dingell, Stupak Release Report on Safety of Food Imported from China; Announce Series of Hearings

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### NEWS RELEASE

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Washington, DC - Reps. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Bart Stupak, Chairman of its Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, today released a staff report entitled "Food From China: Can We Import Safely?" This report was compiled by Committee staff dispatched by Dingell and Stupak to China and Hong Kong on August 17, 2007. The two-week trip involved interviews with Chinese, American and other foreign officials, American and other multinational business executives engaged in the food business in China and reporters from major media outlets with bureaus in China and Hong Kong.

"These findings are first-hand confirmation that food from China presents a clear and present danger to Americans under the current conditions of import," said Dingell. "The report makes it clear that significant responsibility rests with unscrupulous importers in this country and a regulatory system that has broken under the weight of the ever increasing imports. We intend to address this problem by providing the FDA with the resources and statutory ability it needs to deal with this public health threat."

“This report confirms what both the Administration and FDA have refused to admit -- our food import inspection system is broken and incapable of protecting American consumers from potentially deadly imports,” said Stupak. “Other countries have found methods for keeping out unsafe foods. For example, by sampling and testing 15 times the number of shipments we do, Japan has succeeded in protecting its consumers against tainted food imports from China. If the Japanese government can sample and test 15 times the number of shipments we do, at the very minimum, our government can ensure that FDA has the resources necessary to increase testing and sampling of those imports that even Chinese exporters view as risky.”

Dingell and Stupak, along with Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, recently introduced the Food and Drug Safety Act of 2007, which would dramatically improve our country’s system for ensuring the safety of imported food and drugs. The legislation would specifically create a user fee on imported food and drug shipments. Funds generated by the fee would be used to hire additional personnel to perform inspections at both the U.S. border and abroad as well as at FDA labs to increase analysis of food and drug imports. Funds would also be used to test import samples and research new testing techniques.

The chairmen announced the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations will hold a series of hearings related to food and imports. The first food import hearing is scheduled for next Thursday, October 11, 2007. Witnesses are expected to include officials from the FDA and the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A hearing on drug importation is planned for Thursday, November 1, 2007 and later that month the Subcommittee will look into domestic food. Additional information will be posted to the Committee on Energy and Commerce website (<http://energycommerce.house.gov>) as it becomes available.

View October 4, 2007 Committee Staff Report

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Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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